



# St Robert of Newminster RC School and Sixth Form College

## **BTEC Student Handbook**

A useful guide to BTEC courses

# **Introduction**

## **Welcome to the BTEC Handbook!**

This has been produced by St Robert of Newminster RC School & Sixth Form College staff to support all students who are studying towards a BTEC qualification in Years 10-13.

It is designed to help you understand what is involved in your BTEC course and provide you with information to help you be successful in completing it. It will also include a number of important links to other documents and websites where you will find further useful information.

It is important to remember however that your teachers and course leaders remain the best people to answer any queries you have if you are not able to find the answer within this handbook.

Good luck with your chosen BTEC and we hope you enjoy the course(s) you are studying!

## **What we expect of you**

Your BTEC course will be different in some ways to the rest of your subjects, although it will be the same in other ways.

- We expect good attendance at and punctuality to lessons.
- We expect you to be able to follow the school behaviour expectations.
- We expect you to contribute positively in lessons.
- We expect you at times to work outside of lessons.
- We expect you to ask for help if you are confused or if you are struggling to complete work to a deadline you have been set.
- We expect you to hand in work that is organised and neatly presented and can be easily identified as your own work.

## **What you can expect from us**

All staff who teach BTEC courses will do their very best to provide you with high quality teaching and learning experiences.

They will also make the experience as relevant to the particular sector you are studying as possible. This will include using links where possible with people and organisations within the relevant industry.

All staff will support your progress in class and where possible will provide additional support outside of lesson time.

Any coursework that you submit will be marked and assessed within a reasonable time. Staff will also give you the opportunity to improve and upgrade your work if you are keen to do so or if your work has not yet achieved a Pass grade.

All BTEC Students will be registered at Edexcel by the school examination officer Mrs Reid.

All BTEC final grades will be released to students on GCSE and GCE results days.

## **Course structure and assessment plans**

All BTEC courses are based on coursework, there are no exams. You will complete a number of assignment projects. Each one is part of the overall qualification and you will be required to complete all of them to pass the course.

***For a BTEC Level 2 Certificate (15 credits) in Sport you will study 1 mandatory units followed by one specialist unit (5 credits) that provide for a combined total of 15 credits.***

***For BTEC Level 2 Diploma (60 credits) in Business you will study 4 mandatory units plus optional units that provide for a combined total of 60 credits.***

***For BTEC Level 3 Certificate (30 Credits) in Business you will study 2 mandatory units plus 1 optional unit that provide for a combined total of 30 credits.***

Each BTEC will usually be taught by a specialist subject teacher.

Each unit will be based on a different topic related to the course. The detail of each unit can be found in the course specification. There is a link to the different specifications later in this handbook.

Each course is organised at the start of the year so that there is a clear order to the units that you complete. Each BTEC course is unique, therefore Course Leaders will outline this to you.

# Unit structure and Assessment

Most Units are structured the same and will be explained below. A unit is always based on a particular topic or area of the subject. You will not only learn about the topic but you will be expected to produce a project based around the topic.

*This is a guide as to how long the unit will take to complete*

*This is the Unit number and title*

**Unit 1: Business Purposes**

Unit code: L/502/5244  
QCF Level 2: BTEC First  
Credit value: 5  
Guided learning hours: 30

● **Aim and purpose**

The aim of this unit is to enable learners to understand the nature of business organisations and the business environment in which they operate. Learners will do this by looking at the range of organisations that exist locally, regionally and nationally and by considering the business framework in which they operate. There will be a particular focus on businesses in the local context with which learners will be familiar.

● **Unit introduction**

The wealth of the nation is created through business activity. The term 'business' is used to cover organisations as diverse as multinational companies and small local businesses, as well as organisations in the voluntary sector. Businesses have a wide range of purposes. Some supply goods and services, others manufacture goods. Some want to make profits to satisfy their shareholders, others do not. Businesses contribute to the national wellbeing and the unit considers the purposes of these different businesses.

Businesses are organised differently. The largest businesses operate globally. Others may wish to remain small and free from too much legal control. The smallest businesses, for example, individuals providing an ironing or gardening service, may be run from the owner's home and have a limited sphere of operation. Learners will look at how businesses are classified in terms of their activities and will consider the relative importance of each by looking at the local economy.

Businesses do not operate in a vacuum. The government sets the business context. Account has to be taken of the requirements of the European Union in areas such as competition. In general terms, the government wants to create a business framework in which businesses and individuals can flourish. Learners will look at some simple linkages to understand how the government affects business. When interest rates fall, businesses borrow cheaply to invest and produce more to sell at home and abroad, so they take on more employees who receive incomes which they then spend on goods and services so stimulating demand for products from other businesses. Growth, income, exporting and employment can all be examined through examples such as this.

Learners will look at the changing patterns in the business environment and the reasons for these changes. Businesses need to be flexible and responsive to the changes in the business environment if they are to survive and succeed.

● **Learning outcomes**

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the purpose and ownership of business
- 2 Understand the business context in which organisations operate.

Edexcel BTEC Level 1 Firsts specification in Business  
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*This is a brief summary of what the unit is about*

*This is the key learning that will take place*

## Unit content

### 1 Understand the purpose and ownership of business

Purpose: supply of goods and services eg at a profit, free, at cost, for sale below cost

Ownership: sole trader; partnership; limited companies (private [ltd], public [plc]); charity; voluntary organisations; co-operatives; government

Size: small; medium; large

Scale: local; regional; national; European and global organisations

Classification: primary (eg farming, forestry, fishing, extraction/mining); secondary (eg manufacturing, engineering, construction); tertiary (eg private service industries, local and national public services, voluntary/hot-for-profit services)

### 2 Understand the business context in which organisations operate

Role of government: European; national; local; growth, full employment; inflation/deflation; surpluses; competitiveness; equality

Business environment characteristics: markets; trends (employment, income, growth); relative growth/decline by sector: decline of primary and secondary industries; growth of tertiary service industries; legal framework

*This now outlines the detail of what you will learn for each area of the unit. You will learn about all of the key terms and ideas that are listed here. You may have to include some of this learning in your assignment/project*

## Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
<b>P1</b> identify the purpose of four different business organisations [IE]	<b>M1</b> contrast the ownership and purposes of two different business organisations	<b>D1</b> evaluate how a business organisation has responded to changes in the business environment.
<b>P2</b> describe the different types of business ownership, linking this to the size and scale of four different organisations		
<b>P3</b> explain how businesses are classified using local and national examples	<b>M2</b> compare areas of growth or decline in the primary, secondary and tertiary classifications of business activities.	
<b>P4</b> outline the role of government in creating the business climate [IE]		
<b>P5</b> explain the characteristics of the local business environment [IE, RL]		

**PLTS:** This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

*This outline assessment and grading criteria.*

The above grid will be used to produce an assignment or set of assignments for the unit. In this assignment you will be given a situation, a role and a set of tasks to complete. These tasks may include written work, research, oral or ICT presentation work, working as an individual or in teams.

The assignment will ask you to produce evidence for each of the statements listed in the Pass criteria column. These statements are linked back to the Unit content explained on the previous page. You must complete all of these to pass the unit.

## Assignment Example



**BTEC National Diploma in  
Business**



### **Unit 1 – The Business Environment**

#### **Assignment 5**

**Date issued – Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2010**

**Interim submission date – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

**Final submission date – Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

Note: This assignment only covers some of the grading criteria and must be completed along with assignments 1, 2, 3 and 4 before a grade can be awarded for this unit.

#### **Scenario**

You have just been employed as an article writer for a new business magazine that is to be launched in the next few weeks.

This assignment will allow you to meet the following criteria for Unit 1:-

- *P6 – Describe how political, legal and social factors are impacting upon the business activities of the selected organisations and their stakeholders*
- *M3 – Analyse how political, legal and social factors have impacted on the two contrasting organisations*
- *D2 – Evaluate how future changes in economic, political, legal and social factors, may impact on the strategy of a specified organisation*

#### **Task 5**

You should continue to develop the article you started in Task 1.4 with the following.

- A description of the political, legal and social factors that impact on the business activities of your two selected organisations and their stakeholders.
  - Select three influences from each factor and describe their impact on both organisations.
  - Each influence should be researched from the point of view of both countries.
  - Business activities are any activities carried out by the organisation to achieve its purposes, e.g. recruitment, transport costs, designing a product, promotion etc.
- Select at least three business activities from those you identified. Analyse how each of these has changed because of political, legal and social aspects of the business environment.
- For each paragraph develop one point by stating why the activity has changed, for example, 'Minimum wage laws have increased the cost of hiring staff at Marks & Spencer'. How and why has this affected the organisation?
- Choose one of the two organisations looked at in this part of the assignment. List the aims and objectives of your organisation.

If you are successful in completing all the evidence for the Pass criteria you may attempt these activities which will help you to gain a higher grade. There is often a link between these statements and those for the Pass criteria (for example here between P6, M3 and D2)

# Assessment Feedback

All your work is assessed internally by your teachers. They will feedback to you on how you have done and whether you have met the Pass criteria (see previous page) and on any Merit or Distinction criteria you may have attempted using an Assessment Feedback Sheet.

## Final Submission

Date submitted:

Criteria	Met/ Not Met	Assessor Comment	IV Comment
P6			
M3			
D2			
Learner Feedback			

Assessor Signature.....

IV Signature.....

Date.....

This will give you a permanent record of what you still need to do. It will also tell you what you have completed so far. It may be for example that you have completed all the Pass work but have not yet achieved the Merit work.

You will then be given the opportunity to improve your work using the feedback you have been given to help you.

Based on your previous work and the target grade you have been set by your teacher, you should then have a good idea of what you still need to do for this piece of work.

After you have attempted the work for a second time it will be reassessed and you will receive feedback again. This process will continue beyond this

depending upon your target grade and in line with the re-submission policy which is explained later.

# **Target Setting**

The school will set you a target grade for the BTEC course you are studying. This will help you to self-assess your progress throughout each unit of work. You may be asked to improve your work to try to achieve your target grade.

Remember that your final BTEC grade of Pass, Merit or Distinction is based on different pieces of coursework so it is important that you do your best on every one.

As well as getting specific feedback on your coursework after you have handed it in and it has been marked, you will also receive some more general targets when your target grade is set near the start of each Unit.

## **Internal Verification**

All the assignment work that you complete is marked by your teachers. However to make sure that it is being marked correctly and consistently across all students some of the work is then checked by other teachers in the department.

This process is known as Internal Verification. This is the system used to ensure that the correct standards are being met by you and by the teachers assessing it.

During the course of the year some samples of work may also be sent to someone outside of the school who will also check the work and the assessment carried out in school. This is known as External Verification and is again another quality check.

These processes should make no differences to you and your work and you should continue to work hard to meet deadlines and produce the work you have been asked to. If you have any concerns about the decision that your teacher has made when marking and assessing your work then you should refer to the Appeals Policy, details of which are included in the Policies section of this Handbook.

# Grading

At the end of the course you will receive an overall grade based on all the units you have completed. This will take into account the individual scores you achieved for each unit.

Different systems are used to work out the overall grade for BTEC courses.

### ***For a BTEC level 2 Certificate Unit***

If you achieve a Pass overall you will score :	5 points
If you achieve a Merit overall you will score :	6 points
If you score a Distinction overall you will score :	7 points

### ***For a BTEC level 3 Certificate Unit***

If you achieve a Pass overall you will score :	7 points
If you achieve a Merit overall you will score :	8 points
If you score a Distinction overall you will score :	9 points

***To calculate the overall grade you must achieve the following points scores:-***

Qualification	Points range above pass grade		
	Merit	Distinction	Distinction*
BTEC Level 2 Certificate	85–94	95–99	100 and above
BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate	170–189	190–199	200 and above
BTEC Level 2 Diploma	340–379	380–399	400 and above

#### **BTEC Level 3 Certificate**

Points range above pass grade	Grade	
230-249	Merit	M
250-259	Distinction	D
260 and above	Distinction *	D *

## **Evaluation/Feedback**

Throughout the course you have the opportunity to comment on how the course is going for you. You might want to comment in general or about something more specific. Remember this is about the course and the content of the course not how your teacher has dealt with your behaviour. Any comments you make will help us to improve how we run the course for you.

This can happen in any of three ways

1. You can speak to you teachers during lessons or at any other time outside of lessons about your work and your progress.
2. You can make a written comment on the Assessment Feedback Sheet (explained in the Assessment Feedback section) that your teacher completes when they return marked work to you.
3. You can complete a student voice questionnaire at the end of the course. Here you can write a more detailed comment about the work you have produced, the learning experiences you have had, or how you have progressed in a particular unit of the course.

# Policies

There a number of important policies that exists to help all BTEC courses to run successfully. The most important ones have been written for the school specifically and there are some produced by Edexcel who manage BTECs across the UK.

All policies are available for you to read either on the school Website or on the Edexcel website. It is important that you read the main ones and that you ask you teachers and course leaders if there is anything you do not understand.

## **Key Policies**

1. **Quality Assurance** – the key parts of this document are to do with how work is assessed and graded, how the marking is completed by teachers, how it is monitored and checked, how student work is stored, and how student progress is monitored throughout the year.
2. **Appeals** – this document explains what you should do if you feel that you have been treated unfairly at any stage during the course. This policy relates directly to your BTEC work specifically. For example you would need to refer to this policy if you did not agree with the mark you had been given for a piece of BTEC work.
3. **Equal Opportunities** – this document explains how the school and Edexcel make sure that everyone receives the same opportunity on every BTEC course.
4. **Malpractice** – this document explains what would happen if a student is discovered to have cheated or copied work from someone or somewhere else and is passing it off as their own. Clearly this is a very serious issue and will not be tolerated by the school or by the Edexcel examination board.

5. **Health and Safety Information**– this document explains how the school recognises and accepts its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff, pupils and visitors.

All key policies relating to BTEC qualifications can be found at:-

**<http://strobertofnewminster.co.uk/policies/>**

## Key resources-useful links

School website	This contains all the useful documents that you might need to use or may need to read. This includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy documents</li></ul>
<a href="http://www.edexcel.com/quals/firsts/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.edexcel.com/quals/firsts/Pages/default.aspx</a>	This is where you can find all the important information about all current BTEC First courses. Most useful for students are the specifications for each BTEC giving detail on all the units.